

# Marketing communications proposal for bulldog natural grooming assignment

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## Marketing Communications Proposal for Bulldog Natural Grooming 1)

INTRODUCTION The UK men's skincare industry was a ? 57 million a year industry in 2008 and is highly competitive. It is still a miniature market when compared to the women's skincare revenue which was 10 times higher in the same time. (<http://www.mintel.com/press-centre/press-releases/237/mens-skincare-market-just-doesnt-scrub-up>).

It is under these circumstances that Bulldog was established by Simon Duffy and Rhodri Ferrier. Bulldog is a natural-skincare brand specially formulated for men.

They have aimed at differentiating their product by the organic nature of the products where most of the competitor's products included synthetic ingredients and by refraining from animal testing for which they were accredited by the BUAV (British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection). They are the only brand in the market currently with the accreditation.

(<http://www.buav.org/a/2009/12/23/257>) The aim of Simon Duffy is to get a Bulldog product into every bathroom in Britain and they aim to achieve this by positioning themselves as an ordinary brand for ordinary men.

With the phenomenal growth experienced since the launch, it is now decided to further promote the Bulldog brand by investing in above the line promotions. The following is a marketing proposal which recommends the courses of action which needs to be undertaken in the promotion of the brand. 2) ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FOR BULLDOG The key role of communications is to spark a conversation between the organisation and its stakeholders especially the target audiences.

This key purpose can be summarized through the acronym DRIP (Fill, 2006) which states; Differentiate: Here the company aims at differentiating their product offers in order to establish a unique position in the consumers' mind which acts as a competitive-advantage. Bulldog needs to differentiate itself from the largely synthetic male cosmetics by highlighting its organic nature. It also needs to differentiate their offer from organic male cosmetic brands such as Green People through being the only grooming company to be recognised and approved by BUAV for restricting animal testing and also by adoption of a fair trade strategy.

Remind/Reassure: Marketing communications must remind people of needs they might have and must remind them of benefits of use. Here Bulldog must ensure that they are in the forefront of their consumers mind at the time of purchase. They must use constant communications to remind the consumers of the benefits of using organic products while reassuring them of promised benefits which are received through usage of products. Inform: This role of communications aims at conveying facts and information to current and potential customers through suitable channels.

It helps in developing the knowledge of the product in the existing consumers mind while building awareness in the potential customers.

Persuade: This aims at convincing and persuading potential customers to enter into a mutually beneficial relationship with Bulldog. It can also be used on existing customers by continuous post-purchase communication and through loyalty schemes which are aimed at promoting repeat purchases.

The market for organic male grooming products is still in an early growth stage; therefore the marketing proposal aims at building awareness among the potential customers which plays a key role in customer acquisitions and also on differentiating the product offer of Bulldog while reminding the customers of the benefits of using organic products. 3) SOSTAC AND IMPORTANT ELEMENTS TO BULLDOG The marketing communication proposal provides a plan of action on how the communications objectives are to be achieved.

The SOSTAC planning system (Smith, 2004) is used by organisations in order to plan their marketing communications activities. All elements of SOSTAC are important as they all have a part to play to ensure the effectiveness of the Marcomm campaign. The following elements constitute the SOSTAC planning system. a) SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS The situational analysis is an investigation of the organisation's current activities and the trends in the market at the time of planning the marketing communications which helps in determining the areas needed to be addressed through the Marcomms in order to achieve the organisational goals.

It is very important as situational analysis creates the foundation for the company to decide courses of action to be implemented. PEST It consists of an analysis of the wider environment which helps us in identifying the trends in the market along with potential changes that can be expected in the market in near future. It analyses the political climate in order to identify policies and changes to governance implemented by the governments in the

future which may act as barriers to the marketing communication activities or may create favourable effects on the marcomms.

Ex: Changes to legislations especially on policies on usage of internet which will affect the browsing experience. The analysis of economic environment is helpful in analysing the risk to business especially due to marcomms being a high investment and can signal the company whether undertaking significant marcom activities is beneficial taking into consideration the situation of the economy. Ex: Increasing of taxes on services results in high advertising expenditure.

The social environmental analysis is the most important element here as it gives an idea of the current trends in consumer behaviour and how marcomms will be embraced by the public. It is important in deciding which promotional tools will be effective in communicating the message to the public and which will not by taking into consideration aspects such as education, demographics and lifestyle trends of the public. Examples here would be increasing of the part played by social media in people's life, replacement of TVs with computers.

The technological environmental analysis benefits the company in identifying the latest technological developments in the aspect of communications and their dispersion in the market in order to decide the effectiveness in using new communication tools in generating planned results which can also result in benefits in terms of costs for the company. For example the high dispersion of internet facilities will mean high opportunities for exposing customers to a brand in terms of online promotions. CURRENT PROMOTIONS

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Analysing current promotions is helpful in deciding the overall effectiveness of the communication tools used and the response they have been able to generate in the target market. It is also necessary to identify the image which has been portrayed through the communications that needs to be maintained in order to be consistent and also avoid customers perceiving discrepancies in the future with the current image. In order to decide the type of message which can be used to promote the Bulldog products, it is necessary to identify the target market for which the marcomm effort will be directed to.

In addition it is of utmost importance that a synergy is achieved with the positioning of the Bulldog brand and the needs of the target market in order for the marcomms to be grasped by the target market. **COMPETITION** The next stage of situational analysis focuses on analysing the competitors. Here the aim is to identify the target audience of competitors, which marcomm tools they are currently using, their effect in terms of generating a response from the customers and identifying the image and positioning that they portray through their communications.

It is beneficial for the company in terms of identifying areas that the competitors have not addressed through their communications which may be able to generate a response from the customers. In the market for organic skincare products, Bulldog can identify that none of the competitors have used social networking to promote their products although the trends suggest that a majority of the population is now involved in one or more social networking sites.

Therefore it provides an opportunity for Bulldog which needs to be addressed through the marcomm proposal. BALANCE SCORECARD Although many companies use SWOT analysis as the final step in environmental analysis, balance scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1992) can be used to better arrive at the requirements to be addressed through the marcomm proposal. It considers four perspectives, namely customer perspective, internal business perspective, financial perspective and learning & growth perspective.

Customer perspective:

Here Bulldog needs to ascertain the current requirements of customers which has not being addressed by the competitors and devise methods to satisfy the requirements while deciding which tools are most effective in differentiating Bulldog product offering and communicating the benefits of Bulldog products to customers. Financial perspective: By identifying the required courses of action, Bulldog can now identify its ability to finance such a communications effort and consider additional funding needs and sources for those funding.

In addition it needs to consider whether the planned communications will generate the required shareholder value and be able to drive growth in terms of revenue and market share. Internal business perspective: Here Bulldog needs to identify its strengths and weaknesses and aim at alleviating weaknesses in order to address opportunities better. They especially need to focus on developing their online transaction systems and websites to enable customer convenience when they are making online transactions.

It also needs to set targets in terms of achieving the marcomm objectives which may be used to identify any shortfalls and prepare action plans to counter the effects if needed. In addition it needs to develop better relations with their agencies as they play a major role in implementing the marcomms. Learning and growth perspective: This is of less relevance to marcomm proposal but it is important for Bulldog to allow development of their employees which will enable the empowerment and affect the quality of decisions taken by them.

It is especially important for employees at key touch-points such as marketing & sales are better trained in their areas to be effective in convincing the targets of the products. b) MARCOM OBJECTIVES The marketing communications objectives revolve around three aspects (Solomon, 2002); \* Cognitive aspects which aim at increasing awareness of the brand in the target market and develop knowledge of the product range \* Affective aspects aiming at positioning the brand image on consumers mind and communicate the value proposition to the target market. Conative aspects which persuade customers towards action which may include trial or repeat purchase. The above needs to be addressed by bulldog by setting S. M. A. R. T. objectives which are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. An example of S. M. A. R. T objectives for Bulldog are; \* Increase awareness among their primary target market of 16 to 34 year male groups by 30% compared to 2010 by the end of 2011. \* Using advertisements to entuse & entice customers in order to increase the trial purchases in 2011 by 50% compared to 2010. ) MARCOM STRATEGY The marketing communication strategies can be divided into 3 categories

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(Dowling, 2004); Push: The strategy aims at promoting the product to the next member in the marketing channel, with that member expected to promote it to the next level until the end consumer is reached. Therefore it's called 'Push' as the product is pushed towards the customer through channel partners. This method mainly uses personal selling ; trade promotions. Pull: Here the target of communications is the end consumer.

The aim is to generate increased awareness, build attitudes and tempt the consumers to demand the product or service and therefore 'Pull' the product towards them. The types of promotional tools used in this include advertising, direct mail and sales promotions. Profile: This strategy is aimed at creating favourable perceptions and attitudes in the brand's stakeholders in order to satisfy organisations corporate communication goals. It also involves an element of creating trust and rapport with the organisation's publics and therefore uses more credible methods of public relations including press releases and annual reports.

Bulldog's new communication strategy is a pull strategy which uses above the line advertising. It is also recommended to use a secondary push strategy which is aimed at negotiating with retailers in order to boost sales through display and merchandising at stores. It is most important to ensure that all the efforts are integrated so-as-to avoid confusion of the target audience and any perceived discrepancies. d) MARCOM TACTICS Message: (Please refer section 4) Tools & Media:

Here bulldog needs to decide which tools out of the promotional toolbox they will be using to carryout the Marcomms. The major tools available are

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Advertising, Digital marketing communications, Sales promotions, Personal selling, Public relations, Direct marketing, Sponsorships and exhibitions & Product Placements. Here the tools need to coincide with the strategies they are using such as a pull marketing strategy being supported by advertising, sales promotions and push marketing strategy being supported by personal selling and trade promotions.

With advertising being the preferred tool to be used bulldog needs to aim at create cognition in terms of attention, take them through affective behaviours in terms of creating interest and desire and persuade customers to take action in terms of trial or repurchase which constitutes conation. With integrated marketing communications being increasingly being used, there need to be consistency with the company's positioning and synchronization of the marcomms in order for them to be effective. e) ACTION

The Action stage of marketing communications proposal concerns 3M's: Manpower, Money and Minutes which are related to the implementation aspects of the proposal. Manpower: This basically considers how the task of marketing communication activities for Bulldog is to be carried out and who is held responsible for each decision area. It can be recommended for Bulldog to outsource the marcomm activities to an agency since they are highly specialised in these activities. Money: The budgeting method to be adopted can be based on various methods such as percentage of sales , competitor parity and objective & task method.

Minutes: The schedule of activities for the implementation of the communications effort needs to be broken down and an implementation plan

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needs to be drawn. f) CONTROL In order to measure the effectiveness of the communications strategy, Bulldog needs to set targets and continually assess their performance. Setting targets and follow up on the achievements will help the company to make sure they're on the right path to achieving their objectives. 4) MARCOM MESSAGE AND EVALUATION In deciding the marcom message Bulldog first needs to identify the level of involvement associated with the purchase of the products.

Here it can be said that the involvement is low since the perceived risk associated with purchase in terms of financial investment is low and the time and effort spent on purchase decision is low when compared to a purchase decision for a car for instance. Rational messages aim at changing attitudes of customers towards a brand and ensure the placement of the brand in the consumers' evoked memory set by presenting facts, figures and arguments which make the brand stand out from the competition. In terms of bulldog they include 100% organic ingredients, the BUAV accreditation and the low price compared to the.

These are important as today's customers are more concerned about the ingredients and their effect on their body and health. Since rational messages require time and consideration in order to be processed by the individual, it is recommended for Bulldog to use them in printed media such as advertisements in magazines. As new research suggests, including rational elements in messages avoids advertising from being ignored and play a greater part in generating sales and leads through placing a brand on the evoked set of brands when it comes to purchase decisions.

On the other hand emotional elements aim at sparking emotional responses that create engagement with the brand. Emotions such as fear, humour are used effectively in order to create a sense of differentiation for the brand which will make a lasting effect on the consumer and is able to surpass price sensitivity and establish a premium position for brands in the market. These aspects are better used in TV advertisements where people can understand the underlying message faster.

Although they can depend on humour it is better for them, being a fair trader and non-animal-testing brand, to make customers a part of an important initiative which can appeal to the 'heart' of the consumers and make the brand more memorable to the consumer. With research suggesting fame as a highly effective emotional element which is developing in the market, Bulldog can also use their aim of positioning the product as an ordinary brand for ordinary men to create fame for the brand which is able to generate further positive results for them.

Therefore advertising for Bulldog need to include both rational and emotional elements to differentiate and inform consumers about the benefits while attempting to make an emotional connection with them. 5) FUTURE OF ADVERTISING The Wharton article (<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=2344>) is about the future of advertising which evaluates the claim that internet based advertising is rapidly replacing the offline advertising in the TV and magazines.

The companies of today are more gravitated to place advertisements on the internet in search engines such as Google, social networking sites such as <https://assignbuster.com/marketing-communications-proposal-for-bulldog-natural-grooming-assignment/>

Twitter ; Facebook and video sites such as You-tube. The main reason for this is the cost coupled with the ubiquity of internet and most probably due to the ability of online advertising to be interactive and to develop a two-way dialogue between the company and the customer. But the increase in online advertising has been generating negative effects in terms of intrusion into the privacy and browsing experience of the user, especially with pop-ups and banner advertising.

The future of advertising project is therefore established with the aim of developing a model which allows companies to craft effective strategies using a mix of traditional and new-media which is more effective. The relevance of this to Bulldog is that they need to understand that both types of media are important as each media has its unique characteristics which can be useful in order to appeal to a more larger and mass audience. With that in mind, Bulldog's communications strategy will be designed to be both online and offline to achieve synergies with the wider target audience. 6)

## CONCLUSION

The market for men's skin care products is increasingly becoming competitive and Bulldog is currently holding a prominent place by becoming a fair-trade brand and a socially responsible brand with BUAV accreditation. Through the above it is apparent that understanding the role of marketing communication, integrating a message which can differentiate the brand and position it at a level unsurpassable by competitors and devising a clear and precise course of action, all leads to effective communication with the target customers able to achieve specified marcomm objectives more effectively.

It can be said that, by undertaking an integrated marketing communications strategy which is balanced between online and offline promotions, Bulldog will be able to maintain momentum in the competitive scope but it is recommended to switch between the DRIP elements continuously with the relative changes in the market demands and the product offers. 7)

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